

High School AIMS Writing

Exemplars scored with the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits of Writing.

Prompt: (Set 2)

Writing

DIRECTIONS:

Read the writing prompt below. Use the space on this page for your prewriting activity. Then write your first draft on the following two pages.

You are responsible for hiring employees for a company. Fifty people have applied for one job opening.

Write an essay describing the qualities you are seeking in an ideal employee. Explain why these qualities are necessary for employment.

Your essay should:

- **Include an introduction with a clearly stated thesis.**
- **Be supported with details, facts, examples, or descriptions.**
- **Have an effective conclusion.**

Remember to edit for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

AIMS Writing is a summative test of writing that is scored holistically. The prompt is revealed only at the time of testing. The student responses are produced in one sitting without any outside assistance during the writing process. Other than consulting a dictionary or a thesaurus, the student is writing entirely on his or her own. The AIMS score offers a snapshot of how well the student writes to the cold prompt on that day. Students who have the opportunity to write often in many different settings will better demonstrate the skills they have learned when they respond to the AIMS prompt.

The holistic rubric used for scoring AIMS Writing is based on the 6 Traits of Writing used as a teaching tool in Arizona classrooms. Strand 2 of the Academic Writing Standard is also based on the 6 Traits of Writing. In the classroom, teachers can focus on one or more traits according to their lesson plans, score writing for individual trait(s), and offer constructive feedback on the trait(s) to each student. Teaching writing at any level requires specific feedback, and using the 6 Traits of Writing is an excellent way to assist students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses throughout the school year.

Scoring for AIMS with the holistic rubric emphasizes the traits that are most important for recognizing good writing. Ideas, content development, and organization are the heart of any piece of writing. Without clear, focused ideas developed logically with supporting details, a paper will not communicate the intended message. Voice, word choice, and fluency are the next most important elements of a written response. With appropriate vocabulary and the crafting of sentences, the writer can enhance ideas and connect with his or her audience, whether formally or informally. Conventions are also important, but even with good skills in conventions, a response will not communicate well without the other qualities.

Each of the following papers is assigned a score from 1 to 6. A score point 1 paper is inferior, a score point 2 paper is poor, a score point 3 paper is inadequate, a score point 4 paper is appropriate and acceptable, a score point 5 paper is excellent and skillful, and a score point 6 paper is sophisticated and skillful. Perfect papers do not exist; therefore, even those that score 5 or 6 will have some errors.

HOLISTIC RUBRIC BASED ON 6 TRAITS OF WRITING

<p>SCORE POINT 6</p> <p>Response is sophisticated and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exceptional clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization that often show insight. • in-depth and/or creative exploration of the topic using rich, relevant, and credible details. • a strong, perhaps creative, beginning and a satisfying conclusion. • specifically and carefully chosen words that are skillfully crafted into phrases and sentences that enhance meaning. • intentional and committed interaction between the writer and the reader. • effective and/or creative use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 5</p> <p>Response is excellent and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization. • a balanced and thorough exploration of the topic using relevant details. • an inviting beginning and a satisfying sense of closure. • a broad range of carefully chosen words crafted into phrases and varied sentences that sound natural. • awareness of the reader and commitment to the audience and topic. • effective use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 4</p> <p>Response is appropriate and acceptable in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas adequately developed with a clear and coherent presentation of ideas with order and structure that can be formulaic. • relevant details that are sometimes general or limited; organization that is clear, but sometimes predictable. • a recognizable beginning and ending, although one or both may be somewhat weak. • effective word choice that is functional and, at times, shows interaction between writer and audience. • somewhat varied sentence structure with good control of simple constructions; a natural sound. • control of standard conventions although a wide range is not used; errors that do not impede readability.
<p>SCORE POINT 3</p> <p>Response is inadequate in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad or simplistic ideas that are understood but often ineffective. • attempts at organizing that are inconsistent or ineffective; beginnings and endings that are underdeveloped; repetitive transitional devices. • developmental details that are uneven, somewhat predictable, or leave information gaps; details not always placed effectively in the writing. • reliance on clichés and overused words that do not connect with the reader; limited audience awareness. • monotonous and sometimes misused words; sentences that may sound mechanical, although simple constructions are usually correct. • limited control of standard conventions with significant errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 2</p> <p>Response is poor in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overly simplistic and sometimes unclear ideas that have insufficiently developed details. • sequencing of ideas that is often just a list; missing or ineffective details that require reader inference to comprehend and follow. • missing beginning and/or ending. • repetitive, monotonous, and often misused words awkwardly strung into sentences that are difficult to read because they are either choppy or rambling; many sentences that begin with repetitive noun + verb pattern. • lack of audience awareness. • little control of basic conventions resulting in errors impeding readability. 	<p>SCORE POINT 1</p> <p>Response is inferior in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of purpose or ideas and sequencing. • organization that obscures the main point. • an attempt that is too short to offer coherent development of an idea, if it is stated. • extremely limited vocabulary that shows no commitment to communicating a message. • sentences with confusing word order that may not permit oral reading. • severe and frequent errors in conventions.

Someone will work hard
and good at it some people
are looking for a job some
of them need money for food,
bills, and radt. What ciend of people
are there, like some are teenoters
are looking for a job there nice
people friendly people or good at it
Sometimes. The awer will be a good
prson and race good many for the
prson how will work hard so hard
at it the prson will get some
food and it will get the bills done
and the radt done.

The reader has much difficulty attempting to understand what the main idea is in this paper. Organization does not consistently guide the reader. The writer mentions “people are looking for a job” and “some . . . need money for food, bills, and radt.” but then moves to a new idea: “ciend of people.” Repetition of ideas (see first and last sentences) in such a short piece of writing is more evidence that the writer has not developed a clear and coherent response. These two sentences do not represent an appropriately developed beginning, body, and ending. Vocabulary is limited and sentences are disjointed. Frequent errors demonstrate little knowledge of conventions; spelling is extremely poor.

The response is not a 2 because it lacks idea development, organization, and clear communication of a message.

A construction company is looking for workers but there is only one opening. Fifty people applied but there is only one person who they want. This job is for someone who can get the job done.

When on the job there's lots to be done. Lots of tools will be used. There will be lot of things put together. There will be houses and schools being built.

There will be few requirements. Must be able to work for 8 hours a day and on weekends. Also must be experienced for safety. Able to get the job done when needed.

The response repeats information from the prompt as the main idea. However, the details and supporting information resembles a generalized list of vague skills ("lot of things to put together," "must be experienced for safety." The first paragraph offers an undeveloped beginning; there is no conclusion. Repetitive sentence structure ("There will be . . .") and vague and repetitive words ("is only one." "get the job done,") fail to offer a clear message. The writer fails to demonstrate any awareness of audience. There is a limited control of conventions, with spelling being the most accomplished.

The response is not a 1 because there is a purpose and simplistic ideas. Attempts at organizing into paragraphs are meaningless but present. It is not a 3 because there are no developmental details to support the simplistic ideas and no audience awareness is demonstrated.

As you may know we only have one job opening available at the moment and fifty people have applied. This will be a hard decision to make choosing one person out of fifty. Continue reading to see if you fit the qualifications for this job. Let me briefly tell you what I am looking for in an employee. I am looking for someone: who can work and get along well with others, give it their best, be on time, who will be motivated and determined to get the job done. I don't want to hire the wrong person for the job so be honest or it won't be fun. For example previously I hired the wrong person. She never showed up, always making excuses for being late. Always giving other employees a hard time. I don't want to make that mistake again. So if you think you are what I am looking for and this job is for you then you may have a chance to work for me. It is not easy choosing a person for the job because I have to be able to say "I chose the

right person" and not have to ask myself. I will read all of your resumes and call each of you to let you know if you will or will not be working for me. Thank you for your time and have a great day.

While the writer refers specifically to the ideas in the prompt (“one person out of fifty”) and proceeds to list several traits desired in a new employee (“who can work and get along with others,” “give it there best,” “be on time,” and “who will be motivated and determined to get the job done,”) the message is not clear or effective. The list of traits are not explained or developed in the context of a particular job. The beginning is weak and the ending sounds trite (“Thank you for your time and have a great day”). The writer doesn’t show awareness of the audience with the tone of the response (“be honest or it won’t be fun”), and the several sentences describing a hiree that turned out to be a mistake are not effectively placed details for this message. Overused words (“I am looking for”), clichés (“have a great day”), and sentences that are sometimes awkwardly worded (“It is not easy choosing a person for the job because I have to be able to say ‘I chose the right person’ and not have to ask myself.”) further render the message ineffective. However, some simple sentences are correct (“Let me briefly tell you what I am looking for in an employee.”) There is a limited control of conventions.

The response is not a 2 because it offers broad, simplistic ideas and some developmental details. Words are not misused. It is not a 4 because there is not adequate idea development and words and sentences are not effective or varied.

My assignment is to locate the most suitable person to work for this company. It may appear hard, selecting one out of fifty people. But when you know the exact qualities needed to make the company look good, I'd say it is easy as your one, two, three's. They need to be hard working, willing to do everything to get the job done, know when to ask for help and works well with the other employees and especially the customers.

Ambition is a key to being an ideal employee. Without ambition the person is an easy toss away into the trash. For the company to keep prospering we need hard workers, willing to put forth an ample amount of time. Complete all of their duties, and to get the work done. Yes an ambitious worker is very important but without knowing when to ask for help how important are they?

When you need help you need help. We don't need someone who's big headed or so shy that they won't come to us for assistance. When they are clueless about what to do it is essential for them to ask for help or

they'll never get their work finished. As much as they need help so do the costumers and other employees.

The ability to work with others is crucial to the success of the companies production. Cooperating with others ensures the completion of a days work. Also giving up your time and effort for the costumers will always give the company a good report. Anything that makes the company look good, we accept.

In conclusion, all these qualifications will help me search for the appropriate person for the job. With qualities such as ambition, not being self-reliant, and showing effort towards others how can't I choose the one for the position. My job will be a piece of cake, no strings attached, no problems at all. Only problem is there's fifty resumes to look through. Better get started.

High School – Grade 10

Score Point 4c (Set 2)

The response has clear ideas (hard work, willingness, asking for help, and working well with others) that are developed, although the details are general and limited. Paragraph two appears to be supporting the first two qualities, but specific details are lacking. “Ambition is a key to being an ideal employee.” “For the company to keep prospering we need hard workers.” Paragraph three supports “when to ask for help.” Working well with others” is addressed, although in a general way, in paragraph four. The beginning is present though not inviting. The conclusion is informal but offers an end to the paper. Organization is formulaic but is easy to follow with transitions that work. Word choice is the strongest part of this paper (ambition, prospering, ample, essential, self-reliant). However, the lack of consistently good sentence structure inhibits the clarity that strong vocabulary often supports. Also, the use of clichés and humor detract from the message and present an inappropriately informal voice (“easy as your one, two, three’s,” “an easy toss away into the trash,” “clueless,” “no problems at all,” and “Better get started.”) Conventions do demonstrate some control, but a wide range is not used.

The response is not a 3 because the ideas are clear and there are effectively placed details. Word choice is better than functional at times. It is not a 5 because the response lacks thoroughness in development with only general details of support offered. The general support is too limited to thoroughly develop the ideas.

Hello and thank you to everyone who has applied for the position of Security Guard in the Black Mesa Research Facility. Due to the staggering number of applications received, I, on behalf of the Black Mesa team, feel it necessary to remind applicants of the exacting standards to which we hold all of the Black Mesa personnel. All of our employees are hand-picked from a field of available applicants, because they are exceptionally hardworking, honest, physically fit, and intelligent. We hold these same standards to each and every member of the Black Mesa team.

As you know, Black Mesa is a research facility where many scientists work daily on government projects, from conducting cutting-edge experiments on new elements to finding methods of purifying our air. Black Mesa Security Guards must be on watch constantly to keep the government's valuable information safe. We require our Security Guards to be on duty 12 hours a day, but they must be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This rigorous schedule gives our scientists top-notch protection, so they can work in peace.

Second, our Security Guards must be honest. We run precise background checks on all applicants before hiring. Honesty is key because top-secret materials

are constantly passing through Black Mesa. As such, Security Guards must keep all information in a tight secret, even from their families. A single slip to the wrong person could have dire effects on all of us here at Black Mesa. So, honesty is paramount, and keeps us together as a team.

Third, all members must be in good physical condition. This is especially important for the Security Guards. In the case of an emergency, Guards may be required to lift heavy objects or carry injured scientists to safety. Guards may also be asked to help the scientists in moving things around the lab. To better aid the team, all Security Guards must be physically fit.

Fourth, our guards must be intelligent. Scientists sometimes call on the Security Guards to help them solve problems. Among other things, we have been known to ask Guards to fix an electrical problem, re-wire a computer, or fix a stuck garage door. Intelligence is a major factor when applying at Black Mesa.

All in all, I feel that the applicants will do well in passing our tough standards. I wish you all the best of luck, and I look forward to seeing some of you in blue.

High School – Grade 10

Score Point 5c (Set 2)

The response has an inviting beginning that is informative to the audience and sets up the development of the message. There is clarity, focus, and control as the writer informs the readers of the qualities expected for a person to be hired as a security guard. “All of our employees are hand-picked from a field of available applicants because they are exceptionally hardworking, honest, physically fit, and intelligent.” Each quality is explained directly. “We require our security guards to be on duty 12 hours a day, but they must be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.” “Honesty is key because top secret materials are constantly passing through Black Mesa.” “Guards may be required to lift heavy objects or carry injured scientists to safety.” “Among other things, we have been known to ask guards to fix an electrical problem, rewire a computer, or fix a stuck garage door.” Words are crafted into phrases and sentences that sound natural. “So, honesty is paramount, and keeps us together as a team.” “This rigorous schedule gives our scientists top-notch protection, so they can work in peace.” The writer shows commitment to the topic and attempts to connect with the reader: “I wish you the best of luck . . .” Conventions are applied correctly and the use of the hyphen is noted.

The response is not a 4 because of the clarity and focus in the development. Words are precise and more than functional. Organization is not formulaic. It is not a 6 because the exploration of the topic is not in-depth and sentences are not skillfully crafted to enhance meaning.

Constantly being told to work hard throughout adolescence, children already realize that there are many payoffs for trying their best. But, during and after high school, many young adults tend to slack off and do only the bare minimum. Consequently, people who examine resumes and job applications are interested in hiring employees who have great qualities as a result of previous work experience and an exceptional diligence in everything they do.

After reading over large amounts of applications for the same position, the people responsible for hiring employees want to see something that stands out above the rest. Having worked with one company for a length of time in the past is one thing that they will look for. Not only does this make hirers respect a person more, but it gives them first-hand evidence that this person will exhibit many good qualities employees should have. Dependability is a vital trait that authorities will pay attention to. For example, if a person has very good grades, receives the top diploma in high school, and even earns a college scholarship, they are worth nothing if they aren't on time and ready to work at their job every day. Continuing to be more and more dependable, this so-called "exceptional" student turns into a "not-so-exceptional" student and will probably get fired. Additionally, the traits of honesty and responsibility, that work hand-in-hand, make a big impression on the men and women looking over applications. The more work experience a person has at a single job is a key piece of evidence. It shows that that person

was honest and responsible throughout his or her time working there, and his or her boss probably kept him or her as a result of these qualities. Whether it be at a small fast-food restaurant or a huge law-firm, previous work experience helps a person develop qualities of an outstanding employee.

Another characteristic that someone hiring employees will look for is a person's ability to do more than what's expected. If the hirers see another, mediocre resumé, they won't be impressed. On the other hand, they might look over the resumé of a person who has done many things in addition to going to school and keeping a job and be utterly amazed. Some examples of things that show a person's ability to go "above and beyond" are sports and/or extracurricular activities he or she did in high school, clubs and organizations he or she has been involved with, volunteer work he or she has done, and as stated before, previous work experience. Not only do these things prove that the applicant likes to be involved, but they also give the company a sense that this person is willing to strive for excellence doing whatever it takes. Although someone can graduate and earn a diploma with the bare minimum, he or she has nothing to show for their industriousness, only the lack of. But by trying hard on everything he or she does and always doing more than what's average, a person gives himself a great advantage over other applicants.

The people in charge of hiring employees for their companies are going to look at those who have only a miniscule amount of work experience and seem to try to achieve only the bare minimum, right? Wrong. They want to see a person with qualities such as dependability and honesty and one that stands out in his or her society. After all, the most important lessons in life are learned in kindergarten: hard work is the key to success!

Score Point 6c (Set 2)

The writer has invited the reader in and offered clear guidance from one developed point to the next, then ends with a satisfying sense of closure. The strong beginning introduces an in-depth exploration of the topic.

“Consequently, people who examine resumés and job applications are interested in hiring employees who have great qualities as a result of previous work experience and exceptional diligence in everything they do.” Details are rich and credible. The second paragraph explores the traits of dependability, honesty, and responsibility thoroughly with examples. “Dependability is a vital trait that authorities will pay attention to.” The third paragraph explores the trait of “doing more than what’s expected” as a positive attribute. “Not only do these things prove that the applicant likes to be involved, but they also give the company a sense that this person is willing to strive for excellence doing whatever it takes.” Specific and carefully chosen words are crafted into sentences that enhance meaning while demonstrating a committed interaction between writer and reader. Words and phrases such as “first-hand evidence that this person will exhibit many good qualities,” “so-called ‘exceptional’ into a ‘not- so-exceptional’,” “key piece of evidence,” “mediocre resumé,” “utterly amazed,” and “miniscule” enhance meaning. Varied sentence structures are also a plus. Conventions are well done in this long, complex response.

The response is not a 5 because of the focus, control, and in-depth exploration of the topic. Both the beginning and ending are strong, and the words, phrases, and sentences enhance meaning. There is an effective use of a wide range of conventions.